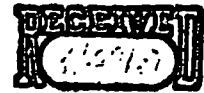




United States Department of the Interior

GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
South Central Region
P. O. Box 26124
Albuquerque, New Mexico 87125



August 26, 1981

Memorandum

To: Task Force Members

From: Task Force Leader

Subject: Withdrawal of Anaconda's Proposed Reclamation Plan

Confidential Claim Retracted

Authorized by: SL

Date: 8/12/81

The Anaconda Company has formally withdrawn their proposed reclamation plan for the Jackpile-Paguete Uranium Mine. The plan was withdrawn because the Pueblo of Laguna and the New Mexico State Highway Department are proceeding with plans to reroute State Highway 279 through the mine.

Construction on the highway is scheduled to begin in October 1982, and will take approximately one year to complete. This coincides with the previously anticipated commencement of reclamation activities.

The new location of the road is preferable from a public safety and maintenance viewpoint, but reduces the ability of Anaconda to move material from one side of the mine to the other during reclamation. Anaconda feels that the new location may substantially impact their ability to reclaim the mine in the manner previously proposed, and have withdrawn the plan until they have had an opportunity to assess this impact. Anaconda cannot presently provide a schedule for the resubmittal of the plan, nor provide an assessment of the magnitude of the changes that will be made to the plan.

Anaconda will submit a revised reclamation plan following the issuance of a right-of-way for the highway to the State of New Mexico. The Federal approvals needed for the right-of-way are being pursued.

✓ The completion of the EIS will be delayed a minimum of three months by this action. All task force members are directed to suspend all detailed work on Anaconda's reclamation plan. However, all work not directly dependent on Anaconda's reclamation plan will continue. Among the work to continue are the preparation of reports on existing conditions, definition and evaluation of the "task force alternatives", preparation of maps and figures, and initial drafting of the EIS document.



9387606

CONFIDENTIAL

POL-EPA01-0000514

Comments on the reports previously submitted will be provided soon, so that the final reports on existing conditions may be submitted by October 1, 1981.

Every effort will be made to prevent the EIS from dragging on needlessly. Upon the resubmittal of the reclamation plan, the preparation of the EIS will proceed at a rapid pace.

Marc E Nelson

Marc E. Nelson

cc: ~~Chief~~, Preparation Branch, MS 650

MENelson:ab: 08-26-81